

Lowell Public Schools

2021-22 Preschool Assignment Policy

Preschool Programs

Lowell Public Schools offers full-day and half-day Preschool Programs to children four years old by September 1st.

Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs):

Three and four-year-old students with IEPs are assigned to preschool based on IEP, required services, residency, and available space. Children with IEPs are provided preschool programming on or before their third birthday in accordance with Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Pre-Registration Period for Preschool:

Lowell Public Schools holds a pre-registration period for preschool during the months of February through April each year. At the time of registration, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be asked to indicate three (3) school choices. A student's preschool placement is for one year and has no bearing on a student's kindergarten placement. There are a limited number of full-day preschool placements in select schools (Cardinal O'Connell Early Learning Center and Frederic T. Greenhalge Elementary).

Families must register on-line. Accommodations will be made for families who need support with submitting an online application. Families in need of support with the online application should contact the District's Family Resource Center.

To be included in the lottery, families must pre-register and provide the following documentation (unless the student qualifies for McKinney-Vento services) before the deadline:

- proof of residency,
- child's birth certificate,
- current immunization/health records, and
- photo ID of parent/guardian(s) registering the child.

Given no transportation is provided to preschoolers, we strongly encourage families to consider selecting schools where the family can ensure on-time, regular attendance by the student.

Preschool Lottery:

Families pre-registering before the deadline are entered into the preschool lottery. The Early Childhood Department diligently considers gender and minority status in adherence with a child's lottery status.

A random and blindly generated five-digit number is assigned to each student at the conclusion of the registration period (no later than May 3rd), and recorded against their pre-registration number.

Any family registering after the lottery pre-registration deadline will automatically be entered on the preschool waitlist by date of registration. The Early Childhood Department will maintain the preschool waitlist.

Pre-registered families will receive written notification providing the student's lottery number and their proposed school assignment by May 31st. Families **must** respond in writing to the letter, selecting from one of the following options upon receiving notification of preschool assignment:

- Accept placement
- Accept placement and remain on waitlist at preferred school
- Reject placement and remain on waitlist at preferred school
- Reject placement and seek alternative preschool programming

Families **must** return the proposed placement offer within 15 days to the Early Childhood Department indicating one of the selections above. Families not responding to the pre-registration placement offer within 15 days will be placed on the waitlist in the order of their lottery numbers. Upon receipt of acceptance of the proposed placement offer, the Early Childhood Department will generate an official assignment letter by June 30th.

Students accepting and receiving assignment must attend school or contact their child's assigned school within five days from the start of preschool to maintain enrollment. After five school days, if the family has not contacted the school or the child has not attended, the child will be unenrolled and their seat will be filled by a student on the waitlist. Students with IEPs in foster care or covered under McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act are exempt from this policy.

Attendance:

It is the parent(s)/guardian(s)' responsibility to ensure regular attendance. Regular attendance matters. Given that there is limited space available in Lowell Public Schools for preschool-age children, the district has established an attendance policy.

Children with unexcused absences of more than 10% of the total number of days of school will be provided written notice and may be unenrolled.

To withdraw a preschooler, parent(s)/guardian(s) must provide a written request to the school to withdraw a student and then forward the request to the Early Childhood Department.